

Jan. 30, 2022

Alberta RCMP statement regarding Coutts border assembly

Coutts, Alta.—In response to those attending the Coutts border assembly on Hwy 4 since Jan. 29, 2022, and the resulting blockage to the north and southbound lanes of traffic at the Coutts border crossing, the Alberta RCMP are issuing the following statement:

The Alberta RCMP will continue to act to preserve the peace and maintain public safety. The RCMP will use only the level of intervention necessary to ensure the safety of all citizens and to maintain peace, order, and security. Our goal for any protest or demonstration is to utilize a measured approach. Extensive efforts have been taken to engage with all stakeholders in the hopes that a peaceful resolution can be reached in this situation.

The Alberta RCMP uses necessary measures to protect the fundamental freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, to promote the safety of all citizens, to enforce laws and to maintain peace and order. In turn, it must be recognized that while everyone has a right to peaceful freedom of expression; the general public, local residents and businesses also have the right to a safe environment and freedom of movement.

The goal of the Alberta RCMP is that traffic flow remain open to allow for emergency response, flow of traffic for area residents, employment purposes, emergency purposes and to permit movement of lawful traffic across the border. Alberta RCMP are working with those individuals who are attempting to disengage from this event so that they are able to do so in a safe manner.

Alberta RCMP advise that a full blockage of Highway 4 will no longer be permitted. Person's participating in this event can expect increased enforcement of Traffic Safety Act and Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulations on Hwy 4 and area roadways. Pedestrians are also reminded to follow all the rules of the road such as jaywalking and stunting.

Alberta RCMP would like to remind participants of this assembly that it is unlawful to ...wilfully obstruct, interrupt or interfere with the construction, maintenance, use or operation of any essential infrastructure in a manner that renders the essential infrastructure dangerous, useless, inoperative or ineffective as per the Critical Infrastructure Defence Act of Alberta. A Highway is considered essential infrastructure. Anyone who actively blocks a highway may be subject to arrest and charge under this act. Anyone who aids, counsels, or directs a highway to be blocked may also be subject to charge under this act.

Alberta RCMP would like to advise that the nearest port of entry that remains unobstructed at this time is Carway/Peigan border crossing.

Further updates will be provided when more information is available.

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Media contact:

Corporal Curtis Peters
Media Relations Officer
Alberta RCMP Media Relations Group
403-651-2733